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WITH THE PUBLISHER'S
COMPLIMENTS

MARCHING AS TO WAR

Talks on Soldiers of Christ's Empire

By

H. G. TUNNICLIFF, B.A.

Author of 'Wet Paint,' 'The King's Scout,' 'A Child's Pilgrim's Progress,' &c.

London
CHARLES H. KELLY
25-35 City Road, and 26 Paternoster Row, E.C.

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To
ROWLAND AND FREDA

First Edition, 1917

FOREWORD

THERE are no ' morals ' appended to these true stories, because I am anxious for the children themselves to ask, ' What has this life of chivalry and self-denial, of sunshine and service, to say to me? ' To-day we realize that a country at war calls her sons and daughters to a thousand activities. Not only are there heroes of the battle on land and sea ; there are also heroes of the hospital and home, the merchant ship, munition factory, and mine. In this book you will read of those who flung themselves into the forefront of the hottest battle against heathendom, of translators who made the gospel munitions, and of home-service men and women who waged a winning warfare against paganism in our own land. They are of all Churches, for

We are not divided,
All one body we.

Where Christ is, there is the Church, and all served the same great cause under the same great Leader. They lived in various ages, but each was a true saint. As saints they made God very real to their fellows because they put Him and His Kingdom first, whether, like Bernard, Irenaeus, and Origen, they lived in far-off days, or, like Forbes Robinson, Arthur Jackson, and Mary Slessor, they left us only yesterday.

I wish to express my deep indebtedness to all the authors whom I have consulted, whose works will be found in the Bibliography; also to the editor of *The Foreign Field* for his kindness in introducing Bartholomew Ziegenbalg to me.

It is my hope that these pages will awaken in the hearts of many a desire to know more of these Christian conquerors, and, above all, a longing to follow where these saints have trod along the adventurous highway that leads to the gleaming pinnacles of the City of God.

H. G. T.

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MARCHING AS TO WAR

I

ALFRED THE GREAT

ONE sunny morning in the far-off days of Britain's youthfulness a queen sat surrounded by her family, a beautiful volume resting on her knee. It was long before the discovery of the art of printing; volumes then were rare and costly, the handiwork of patient artists and skilled illuminators. By her side was a bright, fair-haired laddie, twelve years of age, the youngest of the family. In awe he listened to his royal mother as she read the thrilling lines. He could not read; but in those dark days that was accounted no disgrace, for reading was an accomplishment mastered by few. Even the older children of the royal house could not read the lines of Saxon verse!

'I will give this lovely book to the one who is first able to read it to me,' promised the gentle lady.

The boy's eyes shone. He looked eagerly once again at the glorious page outspread before him, covered with what seemed to him to be magic lines, the initial letter resplendent with the glory of rich red and gleaming gold.

'Do you really mean it, mother?' he asked, scarcely able to believe his ears, for such a promise seemed too good to be true. The very thought of having that treasure for his very own thrilled his boyish heart.

'Indeed I mean it, my son,' was the swift and sweet reply.

'I'll try,' he cried eagerly; and at once he set himself to his task, from which he never wavered until he was able to claim the glorious prize.

Nine years later that laddie, Alfred, sat upon the throne of England. He lived in troublous times. The plundering Danes marched across the north and east of his

beloved land, their pathway marked by the flames of the abbeys they had wantonly fired; and even the good King Edmund, falling into their merciless hands, was bound to a tree and done to death by their cruel arrows.

Alfred stayed their onrush, for he was determined to save the west country for his Lord and Master, and never to surrender her fair fields to men of pagan beliefs. At Athelney, the little island rising above sluggish waters and unplumbed peat-bogs, he found the way of success. His spirit was revealed by his determination to erect a glorious abbey there as a sign visible to all of his gratitude to Him who had wrought so great a deliverance.

After the first years of struggle a time of almost unbroken peace followed. Alfred's great longing was to bless his subjects.

'So long as I have lived I have striven to live worthily,' he declared. His wish, so nobly fulfilled, was to leave a fragrant remembrance of love and good deeds. His

days were spent in defending the poor, in securing justice for all, in spreading education, in the maintenance of true religion and virtue. He knew that it is righteousness that exalts a nation.

He was most anxious that all within the kingdom should learn to read, so that they might be able to unlock the treasures of the Word of God. One day, as he was talking with Bishop Asser, his friend quoted a passage from the Psalms. These were so precious to the king that he used to carry everywhere a copy of the Psalter to read in his leisure moments. At once the king ordered a fair, clean skin of parchment to be brought to him, and this particular passage was written upon it in Latin, and others added. These Alfred carefully translated into Anglo-Saxon—the language of his time—and thus he began the work that grew so dear to his heart of giving to his people passages from the Scriptures in their own tongue.

The Danes burned every book that they

could discover, and this led Alfred to exclaim, 'Let us have God's Book translated into the people's own tongue, so that if the pagans land in greater numbers, and burn all our books, the people may have the Bible by heart.'

Hearing that in far-distant India there were Christians who were believed to use the language which our Lord employed when upon earth, he dispatched one of his bishops, with a stately following, to visit them. Roads were rough, pirates and robbers abounded, rugged mountains, swollen streams, and raging seas had to be crossed; but the undaunted little company travelled on, reached their goal, and returned home, rejoicing in the success of their expedition.

The secret of this great king's life is to be found in these words to his son, almost the last that he uttered: 'I pray thee, for thou art my dear child, strive to be a father and a lord to the people. Be thou the children's father and the widow's friend. Comfort thou the poor, and shelter the weak; and

with all thy might right that which is wrong. And, son, govern thyself by law ; then shall the Lord love thee, and God above all things shall be thy reward. Call thou upon Him to advise thee in all thy need, and so shall He help thee the better to compass that which thou wouldst.'

He ever called upon God, and strove with all his might to right that which was wrong. To-day he is remembered by all as Alfred the Great ; the Great because he was first and foremost the Good.

II

BERNARD OF THE SHINING VALLEY

NEARLY two hundred years after the death of the good King Alfred a baby-boy was born in a noble house of Burgundy. His father, like Mr. Great-heart, the pilgrims' champion, was strong and brave, chivalrous and tender; his mother was so sweet and gracious a lady that when she passed away the weeping townsfolk of Dijon, treasuring her blessed memory, besought the gift of her sainted body. In this happy home circle, enjoying merry games with his five brothers and his only sister, the laddie's days passed swiftly by. He bore the name of Bernard, bestowed upon him in memory of Bernard de Menthon, who had founded the famous

hospice where travellers may still find food and shelter on the snowy Alpine pass that links Swiss Martigny with Italian Aosta.

Delicate in body, he possessed a will of iron ; and when he grew to manhood, though but the third son, be became the leader of his family. He thrilled with longing for the sacred service of his Captain Christ. In his day the life of the secluded cloister or quiet hermitage was deemed to be the way of supreme devotion.

At Citeaux, close to his pleasant home, was a monastery famous for the severity of its rules, and the youth determined that he would forsake all worldly aims and share its rigours. Hard was the life for any, however stout and strong : the hours of sleep broken by repeated calls to meditation, prayer, and hymn ; the hours of daylight spent in the bitter toil of the field with but one meal through all the weary, hungry hours. Weak though he was, Bernard crossed the threshold with rapturous joy, accompanied not only by every one of his

brothers, but also by thirty of his friends whom his impassioned pleading had won.

Ere long it was found that the buildings were too small to contain the men who trooped to share the life of holy contemplation. A new house must be built. Young Bernard—but four-and-twenty years of age—was appointed abbot, and sent forth with twelve companions to form another settlement.

'With the cross of Jesus going on before,' the little company moved eagerly onward, league after league, across the fair fields of France. One day they entered a cheerless valley, known far and wide as the Vale of Wormwood, the evil haunt of merciless robber bands. Bernard bade his comrades halt, for his quick ear had caught the murmur of a silver stream. At once he decided that here the walls of his abbey should rise; violence should be tamed and held captive by the charm of love; the waste wilderness should be tilled and made to blossom as the rose; no longer should it

bear the hateful name of 'Wormwood'; henceforth it should be known as *Clara Vallis*—The Shining Valley.

Soon a rough building sprang up in the lap of the guardian hills, and day and night prayer and hymn rose heavenward from its wooden walls. The fame of its abbot sped far from the lonely place until rich and mighty, high-born and worldly wise, forsaking their wealth, rank, and learning, flocked to the convent clearing to share its mean attire, its watchings, fastings, and toils.

Time passed happily, and new and urgent calls reached the abbot. Even kings and popes summoned him from the Shining Valley to settle their disputes and prove himself their peacemaker.

When Bernard was fifty-five years of age there came the loudest call. The Holy City was in danger—Jerusalem was in peril of falling into the desolating hands of unbelieving Turks. Bernard could not rest in such an hour. Like a torch he

moved through town and village, kindling in the slowest heart a mighty flame of unquenchable enthusiasm. His ardent countrymen wished to make him their commander-in-chief, but he refused.

In spite of all his popularity he remained humble to his life's end. The secret of his greatness and of his humility lies in these words which he once wrote to a friend: 'Now abideth speech, example, prayer, these three; but the greatest of these is prayer.'

In 1153, amid the weeping of his sorrowful monks, who clustered round the bed of their beloved leader, Bernard passed from the Shining Valley to the Shining Tablelands of Heaven. Yet, though more than seven and a half centuries have passed away since those stirring days, the hymns that he composed are familiar to us all; and whenever we sing them let us seek to catch their spirit of deep love for the Lord Jesus Christ and to imitate their writer, who, as one who knew him said, 'was never

puffed up; when every one thought him the greatest, in his own judgement he was the least. Whatsoever he did he ascribed to God.' We all love 'Jesu, the very thought of Thee,' as translated by Edward Caswall, or in Dr. Ray Palmer's version:

> Jesus, Thou Joy of loving hearts,
> Thou Fount of life, Thou Light of men,
> From the best bliss that earth imparts
> We turn unfilled to Thee again.

The lips of that gracious singer now pour forth the harmonies of heaven, but we 'in hymns below' may follow his steps as he sang on earth 'the praise of Jesu's name.'

III

CÆDMON, THE COWHERD CHORISTER

THERE was a sound of rejoicing in the stately Abbey of Streoneshalh, which, securely built above the creek where the gentle Esk, tired with her toilsome road, drops into the tender embrace of the welcoming sea, roars defiance to the bitter blasts of the unfriendly North. It was a feast day in that holy place, where, under the gracious rule of the wise and sainted Abbess Hilda, of royal blood, men and women together learned the arts of peace and love, and, like disciples in the early Church, sharing all things, lived in pleasant and serviceable fellowship. To join in feast and song a mighty company had

forgathered within the walls of hewn stone, some of whom on horse or ass had journeyed weary and dangerous leagues over rolling moorland and through winding dale. Now, the perils of the way forgotten, all was joy and song. From one to another passed the low-toned harp, and clear voices leaped heavenward in silver song.

Cædmon, the cowherd, sat amid the merry throng; but he was sore troubled. Others could pour forth notes of liquid melody, but that boon had been denied him. He was a cowherd, not a chorister. Nearer and nearer sped the witching harp, until in terror lest his turn should come only to expose him to rude jest and scornful laughter, he slipped unnoticed from the feast, his eyes misty with welling tears. Sadly and silently he sank into the straw of the cattle-shed, half seeking the sympathy of the beasts that he daily tended. Sleep soon sought the son of sorrow, and as he slept he dreamed a glorious dream.

The mean cow-shed flamed with celestial

splendour, and before him gleamed a radiant angel.

'Cædmon,' called the heavenly messenger, and the voice was like the tones of a lute softly played by skilled and loving fingers, 'Cædmon, sing some song to me.'

Sadly the cowherd replied, 'I cannot sing, for that was the reason why I left the entertainment and retired to this place.'

Quietly and confidently came the reply, 'Yet you shall sing.'

'What shall I sing?' asked Cædmon in amazement.

'Sing the beginning of created things.'

Then the glorious vision faded, but in the cowherd's heart and mind a wondrous power began to work. Words of matchless melody crowded upon him, and he, who could not sing before, now uttered in noble language the story of the Creator's might.

Hearing of his exploits, the Abbess Hilda bade him enter the monastery, and gladly he obeyed her command. His whole life was now devoted to telling the sacred story

in such winsome ways as would reach the rude and careless. He sang of the creation of the world, the history of Israel, God's chosen people; then turning to the New Testament, he poured out his soul in grateful singing of the Redeemer's love, His coming to the mean manger of Bethlehem, His sufferings on the cruel cross of Calvary, His triumph over death, and His glorious ascension to His heavenly home; he spoke of the punishment of all wickedness, and chanted the joys of those who serve their Master with hearts aflame with love. At last he grew weak, and he felt that the time was now come for him to leave the songs of earth to share the melodies of the choir above.

Near by was a hospital for the dying, and one evening he ordered a place to be prepared there that he might rest.

When night fell he went there, and talked joyfully with those whom he found in that house of weakness and suffering.

After midnight he asked whether they had

the Sacrament there; and when he had received it, he asked whether they all loved him, and bore him no ill-will.

'We all love you,' they cried. 'Do you verily love us?'

'I love all the servants of God,' he replied.

Then, having received the Sacrament, he asked, 'Is it near the hour when the brethren awake to sing by night the praises of the Lord?'

'It is not far off,' they answered.

Then, sinking back upon his pillow, he said, 'Let us wait that hour.'

He fell asleep, to be awakened not by the sweet and solemn hymns of the monks, but by the exultant songs of angels and archangels.

He had sung of his Lord:

He on the tree ascended
and shed His blood,
God on the cross
through His Spirit's power.
Wherefore we should
at all times

give to the Lord thanks
in deeds and works
for that He us from thraldom
led home
up to heaven,
where we may share
the greatness of God.

The cowherd chorister had been

led home
up to heaven.

IV

HENRY DRUMMOND, 'THE PRINCE'

In the King's Park of ancient Stirling a cricket-match was coming to a close one bright, warm summer evening. Two schools had passed the day in close and happy rivalry, but the Stirling High School eleven were still well below their opponents' score, and the time for drawing stumps was fast approaching. Two boys were at the wickets, one nimble and graceful, the other powerful and heavy. The thickset fellow was slogging every loose ball, and calling his partner for almost impossible runs in order to make the most of every precious minute. Cheer upon cheer rose

into the evening air as hit succeeded hit. Another mighty stroke was cheered as the two boys sped across the wicket. One—two—three.

'Come!' yelled the slogger, and his partner swiftly obeyed the call; but that fourth run was fatal. Before the boy could reach the crease the ball had been well returned and the bails whipped off.

The cheers died away, and the onlookers groaned in despair. 'Shame!' cried some; but the outgoing batsman quickly silenced their shouts.

'It's all right, and you fellows are not to cry "Shame!"' he said easily. 'Buchanan is playing A1, and that hit ought to have been a four. I messed the running.'

Presently he sprang on to the back of a friend's pony, and galloped along the race-course in the park till he was almost lost to sight in the golden distance. Then he turned, and came speeding back in time to cheer the slogger, who had pulled off the match.

'Well played, old chap!' he cried joyously. 'Finest thing you've ever done.'

'I say, Drummond,' he said, 'it was my blame you were run out.'

But Drummond would not hear of that. 'Well played, old man, well played!' he cried again.

The schoolboy who played the game at Stirling played the game throughout his life.

Henry Drummond was a saint. Now I dare say that when many of you think of a saint you picture a grave and reverend hermit, with sunken eyes and flowing beard, who lived far away from the haunts of men in some moss-grown cave. But that is only part of the picture. A saint is a man who puts God first, and makes God seem very, very real to his fellow men. Footer shorts are far better than a hair shirt as a dress for a saint.

Henry Drummond just loved life. Fishing was his delight; we have seen that he was an enthusiastic cricketer—he was a

good wicket-keeper as well as a graceful bat; he could skate magnificently; and he used to spend his winter Saturday afternoons in watching footer-matches, either the big League games or keen struggles between boys' teams.

Have you ever read his book *Baxter's Second Innings*? If not—I hope to be forgiven by your fathers and mothers—give them no rest until they have bought you a copy.

He was a Professor of Natural Science in Glasgow College, and he came into contact with thousands of young men, not only in the Universities of Scotland, but the wide world over. He was a great traveller. He visited the Rocky Mountains to study their volcanic marvels; he journeyed through tropical Africa, and discovered the only fossils that had ever been found in Central Africa; he crossed the United States and Canada; he saw Australia and the South Sea Islands.

But it is not as a scientist nor as a

traveller that Henry Drummond will ever be remembered. He loved the British Empire, but he loved Christ's Empire still more. He was a great recruiting-sergeant for the King of kings. He had found true religion such a ripping thing—and I use the word with the greatest reverence—that he longed for every one to share in his treasure.

He used to hold great meetings for young men ; and how the students of the English-speaking races flocked to hear him! They called him 'The Prince,' and as his earnest pleading fell upon their ears there were thousands who determined to lead a new life, who came to realize that all sin is unspeakably contemptible and mean, and that the only true and manly way of life is to be found in the service of the great Captain, Christ.

Boys, too, eagerly responded to his call. He was one of the first to take an interest in the work of the Boys' Brigade, and his special services for boys were always fresh

and full of brightness. That interest in boys never ceased for a moment. He had never grown up, and he still remembered the happy days when, as a boy, he collected eggs, filled his pockets with knives, stumps of pencils, and marbles, and bathed and picnicked on sunny summer days.

He was never dull, for he had found in the service of his Master the perfect freedom that every boy, young or old, so dearly loves.

This was his secret, a secret which he once told to a great gathering: 'Don't be an amphibian,' he said, 'half in one world, half in another. Be men through and through, men in Christ Jesus.' I am afraid that the word 'amphibian' is a very long one to use to boys and girls, but I know that many of you delight in nature study, and I am perfectly certain that some of you know what it means. All of you have seen tiny long-tailed tadpoles moving like fishes under the water which they make their home, and you know that later a change takes place

in those little bodies, and the tadpole of the water becomes the frog of the land, who cannot live in the water without coming to the surface to breathe. That was what Henry Drummond meant. 'Don't be half and half—a sort of religious frog, but be out and out in the service of Christ.'

That was how he lived, and that was why he found life so well worth living.

V

ELIZABETH FRY, THE ANGEL OF THE PRISON

One hot summer morning towards the close of the eighteenth century the driver and the outside passengers of the Norwich coach were astonished by the sight of seven mischievous girls who, linked arm in arm, formed themselves into a living barrier across the high-road. Undaunted by the thundering hoofs of the galloping horses, the girls refused to budge, and the harassed driver was compelled to stop his coach; but the merry laughter of the culprits, delighted at the success of their roguish adventure, quite disarmed his anger, and soon the coach proceeded swiftly on the interrupted journey. The seven girls were sisters who lived at Earlham Hall, an old

house standing in a spacious park, through which ran a clear stream, the children's happy haunt on summer days. Elizabeth Gurney was one of the eleven girls and boys who made the happy family that lived and rollicked there, sharing all their joys and games, and finding life full of sunshine and laughter.

Every Sunday they used to attend the Quakers' meeting, which, after the movement and colour of their daily life, seemed to them unspeakably dull and dreary. One day, however, there came a visitor to the meeting, who was, by the grace of God, to change the whole course of Elizabeth's life. That Sunday the seven sisters, as usual, sat in a row. Elizabeth loved fine clothes, and she was wearing smart purple boots, laced with scarlet. At last William Savery, the stranger, began to speak. All thoughts of clothes, boots, or any other earthly thing were completely chased away when the earnest tones of the preacher fell on the attentive girl's ears. The sermon lasted

for no less than two hours and a half, but throughout young Elizabeth sat riveted, eagerly drinking in the precious and powerful words, her eyes overbrimming with tears.

From that day she earnestly strove truly to follow the Lord Jesus Christ. Her great ambition in life was to please Him, and to be a blessing to all about her. Unselfish, kind, and thoughtful, she grew to be loved by all who met her. She determined to try to do something to help the children in the villages surrounding her pleasant home, and before long she was able to start a little school at which twice a week about seventy children—'Betsy's Imps,' her sisters mischievously nicknamed them—used to gather.

So life passed happily on, its hours filled with useful work or joyous leisure, until her marriage with Joseph Fry, a young banker, led to her removal to the city of London. Here Elizabeth Fry sought opportunities of service. Quietly labouring

amongst the poor and neglected, she soon entered upon the great task which has made her name for ever famous throughout the world.

Have you ever been in prison? Of course not. Elizabeth Fry went, not in charge of a stalwart policeman, special or ordinary, but of her own good-will, that she might help the poor women who were spending terrible days there. The great and good John Howard had already led the way. He had devoted himself whole-heartedly to this Christlike work, until as he toiled fever laid its hot hand upon him, and he was laid to rest in the far-away South of Russia.

Two friends of Mrs. Fry had visited one of the great prisons, and, impressed by what they had seen, they came and told her the horrors of the jail. For the slightest offences men, women, and even little children were sentenced to death or to long terms of imprisonment under the cruel laws of those inhuman days. Elizabeth, accompanied by another brave woman,

obtained permission to visit some of the women prisoners in Newgate Jail. That permission was not easily granted, for their plan involved danger of attack by some of the lawless and ferocious prisoners. Undaunted, however, the two crossed the threshold of the gloomy prison, and at once found themselves face to face with unspeakable wickedness, abounding misery, and saddening squalor. Nearly three hundred women, fierce as untamed beasts, were there, and, terrible to think of, little children herded with them. Eager to obtain money with which to purchase strong drink from a bar in the prison, the women rushed towards the visitors, raising their voices in horrid clamour, and fighting and thrusting aside each other so as to be the nearest to Mrs. Fry and her companion, Anna Buxton. Undismayed by this raging mob, the two quietly raised their voices in prayers of loving sympathy. At once the violence of the women was hushed. Some fell on their knees, and down the cheeks of others flowed

unaccustomed tears. That was the beginning of Elizabeth Fry's great and heroic life-work. When next she visited the prison she fearlessly asked that she might be left alone with the women; and this request being granted, she read to them our Lord's story of the vineyard, and told the attentive hearers how Jesus had come to save those whose lives had been spent in forgetfulness of His love and defiance of His laws. She decided that something must be done for the unhappy children, and soon a school was started in the gloomy prison, a cell serving as schoolroom and a prisoner acting as governess.

Before long Elizabeth Fry's heart was made glad by the change which she saw as the result of her toil and prayer. Where there had been cruelty, drunkenness, and evil there was now quietness and industry. In those dark days women were banished far across the seas to Botany Bay, and the night before each party left used to be marked by scenes of violence so terrible

as to make even the prison officials quail. But after Elizabeth Fry's coming all was changed. No noise was heard, not a pane of glass was broken, and so orderly was the behaviour that only half the usual number of guards was sent.

Throughout the United Kingdom she journeyed, forgetful of self, thinking only of those who were in prison; nor did she rest until she had visited the Continent on like errands of mercy. So her days were spent in doing good, until she received the welcome of her Lord, 'I was in prison, and you came unto Me.'

VI

DAVID HILL, THE BREAD-BRINGER

SOME seventy years ago in the ancient city of York a little fellow used to be seen entering the cottages of the poor. He carried a basket well laden with gifts of food or clothing, presents from his sweet and thoughtful mother.

'Mother dear,' asked the laddie, whose name was David Hill, one day, 'why cannot our maid take these parcels instead of me?'

The answer so impressed the boy as to remain for ever in his memory: 'Because I want you to be unselfish, and never to forget the poor.'

Thirty years later the little bread-bringer was once again busy in the same Christlike way. He had left the ancient city for an

ancient empire, and was a Christian missionary in China. He stood face to face with awful need, and his unselfish heart called to him to remember the poor and desolate. For three terrible years no gracious rains had fallen on the thirsty lands, and Famine, grimly stalking through the stricken provinces, speedily counted his hapless victims by the million. David Hill busied himself in a district as large as Denmark—the great province of Shansi. He had plaited his hair into a queue, shaved the front of his head, and put on Chinese clothes. With two brave and sympathetic companions, he set off on his merciful journey. Travelling was far from easy, for their conveyance, a rude cart with no springs, tossed them hither and thither as it moved slowly along the rough and rutted roads. All too quickly the rescue party saw manifold signs of the horrors wrought by the famine. One of the three, Mr. Whiting, caught fever, and passed to his reward in heaven. Saddened by the loss of this dear

comrade, Hill and Turner travelled on. Everywhere sorrow and sickness reigned. Men, once hale and strong, staggered helplessly over the icy roads, the bitter wind chilling their thinly clad bodies until they could go no farther on their quest for food, but fell and died by the pitiless roadside. The bark of trees, weeds, stones ground to powder, and even human flesh were eaten by the desperate townspeople and villagers. To add to the terror of the time, gaunt wolves, ravenous with hunger, would raid the streets, and, springing upon their enfeebled victims, would tear them to pieces before the very eyes of their terrified friends and neighbours.

David Hill faced and braved all these dangers in his tender compassion for the sufferers, and in his desire to carry to them the relief they so sorely needed.

One midnight, as he lay awake in his head quarters, the Temple of the Iron Buddha, his attention was attracted by a strange low sound, like a moan, coming

from just outside the temple. Surely, he thought, that must be some poor sufferer who has come to plead for relief, and has fallen, faint and helpless, by the threshold. In a moment the missionary forgot all his weariness, and, quickly springing from his bed, made his way across the courtyard to the great doors of the temple. To his astonishment and dismay he found that the door had been locked and the key removed. He could not open the door, and, after waiting awhile and hearing no further sound, he returned to his room. Next morning, when he inquired about the noises of the night, he was told that they were not human, but that a huge and hungry wolf had been prowling around the temple in search of prey.

Every needy family was visited and assisted; and so the days lost some of their horror, until at length the rains brought tardy rescue, and hope flamed afresh in sad and almost broken hearts.

Into one sorrowful home the kindly

visitor made his way with help both for soul and body. Song, the master of the house, was plunged into the depths of distress, for he had lost first his son's young wife, and then his dearly loved daughter. Quickly he realized that this Englishman was his friend, and as he listened to his words of comfort and of hope he felt less desolate. He discovered that the stranger loved the Jesus about whom he had heard, and he resolved to question him about this Object of the Westerners' worship. Slowly his dark heart grew radiant with heavenly light. He destroyed his idols, burned his heathen books, and learned to read God's Word, to sing glad hymns, and to raise the voice of prayer. The husband was shortly afterwards joined by his wife in the new way; and so thankful was he for the light and joy of his new life that he could not think for a moment of keeping the glad tidings to himself. To his relatives, neighbours, and friends the radiant Chinese Christian would declare the wondrous story

of Bethlehem and Calvary. To help David Hill in all his ministries of mercy was Song's greatest delight. The happy days passed swiftly by, until in the Boxer rising of 1900 Song was cruelly done to death because he refused to deny his Lord and Saviour; and so the one-time idolater joined the noble and triumphant army of martyrs, a jewel in the heavenly diadem of David Hill.

To the poor opium-smokers, hopeless and miserable, David Hill brought the glad tidings of a Saviour who sets free the prisoners of evil habits; to the blind boys he told the story of Him who in the land of His earthly journeyings made the blind to see; to the students gathered for their examinations he distributed little copies of the Gospels. He had gone to China to break the bread of life to her hungry millions, and wherever there was need he was ready to supply that need, whether of the body or the soul. Even the children were never forgotten by the busy missionary. He could always find time to romp

and play with the little people whom he loved.

As he lay dying, with hands clasped he prayed in these beautiful words of thanksgiving: 'O Lord, for all those, both high and low, who in every land love and serve Thee, we bless and adore Thy holy name.'

That was just the expression of his large and kindly heart; all men, no matter what their rank or race, were dear to him, and he wished them all to feed on the Bread of Life.

On his tombstone are these words: 'The Son of Man came not to be ministered unto, but to minister.'

David Hill, the bread-bringer, had learned the secret of service from his Lord and Master.

VII

IRENAEUS, THE LISTENING LADDIE

In far-off days in sunny Smyrna by the fringe of the laughing sea could be seen a venerable man of ripe experience, Polycarp by name, the centre of a group of eager and reverent listeners. Every word was precious as gold or gems to those who hearkened to his voice, now weak with age, for he was telling of a bygone day and of a wonderful friendship. Day after day a boy named Irenaeus pushed his way into the close crowd, noting with keen, quick eye the saintly face of the speaker, and drinking in every word of his wondrous story. Here was a man who had not only known but even held close converse with Saint John,

the beloved disciple, and the others of the little company who had shared their Master's toils and travels, and sat at His blessed feet as He taught the multitude in public and the disciple band in private.

We often sing, 'I should like to have been with them then,' and we can realize how entranced Irenaeus must have felt as he listened. Although Polycarp himself had never known the rich joy of seeing Jesus in His robes of earth, yet he knew those who had had that glorious privilege, and he had asked them countless questions about our Lord's appearance in the days of His flesh, His gracious words, and His mighty works. He had learned the story of the blessing of the little children whom the disciples would have turned away; he knew the thrill of hearing how Jesus had restored the little daughter of Jairus—the little lamb, as the Good Master so tenderly called her—to her sorrowful parents; he had been told, too, the mournful story of Gethsemane, the still darker tale of the cross

of Calvary, and then his heart had leaped for joy at the recital of the splendour of the empty tomb on the resurrection morning.

So earnest were the words of Polycarp as he retold these things that they found a deep and immovable lodging in the heart and mind of Irenaeus, the listening laddie.

'I too will serve this Master,' said the boy to himself. 'I too will love this Saviour, who has so dearly loved me as to die for me.'

Years rolled on. To the aged Polycarp they brought a glorious martyrdom. He was promised life and liberty by his persecutors if he would but deny his Lord.

'Swear,' cried the proconsul, unwilling to condemn to death so old and blameless a man, 'swear, and I will set thee at liberty; reproach the Christ.'

The old man's dim eyes flashed and his weak voice rang with holy indignation and lofty triumph as he instantly refused the proffered boon: 'Eighty and six years have I served Him, and He never did me

any wrong; how, then, can I blaspheme my King, my Saviour?'

Meanwhile Irenaeus had grown to manhood. He had travelled far from his Asian home, and settled in Southern Gaul, in the ancient town of Lyons. There he, too, fell upon troublous days. The populace hated the Christians with a bitter hatred, and let slip no opportunity of doing them mischief. Whenever the members of the little church showed themselves in public, their appearance was the signal for the outbreak of violence and robbery. Under the pretence of preserving order the authorities flung the innocent followers of Christ into prison, where they endured terrible tortures. They were flogged with the cruel scourge; some were thrust upon chairs of iron, glowing with heat; others were flung to savage beasts amid the jeers of the heartless onlookers; and yet others knelt to receive the fatal sweep of the headsman's keen and glittering axe. Even the aged Bishop Pothinus, infirm with the weight of over ninety years,

was pitilessly dragged to prison, and as he made his painful way thither was kicked and struck by the rabble of the town. After two days of exhaustion and suffering he passed Home to receive the martyr's crown.

Irenaeus was chosen to succeed him, and fearlessly he obeyed the call, bravely disregarding the manifold perils of the office.

He could not rest inactive. He, who had learned from the lips of Polycarp the Gospel story, felt it a sacred trust to pass the message on. For nearly twenty-five years he laboured on, fighting those who would overthrow the true belief, seeking with all his power to win the heathen from their darkness to the Light of life.

Nothing gladdened him more than to remember that already the gospel was spreading throughout the world. He recalled the cultured citizens and the wandering Scythians, unable to read and write, who still held the same faith and loved the same Lord.

The laddie who had listened grew to be the man who wrote and spoke, and to-day, though more than seventeen hundred years have passed away—think what that means, seventeen hundred years—we still have many of the writings of the boy who counted it a privilege to hear the words of Christ, and in whose young heart the seed found good ground and brought forth a hundredfold.

VIII

ARTHUR JACKSON, THE LIFE-SAVER

One sunny afternoon in August, 1901, a little party was leaving a Scottish hotel for a picnic, when a messenger burst in upon them with the news that two men were drowning in a little loch up in the hills. One of the boys, a sturdy fellow in footer shorts, soon gained the lead as they raced to the rescue. It was no easy task to run for more than a mile uphill on a hot afternoon; but Arthur Jackson was dogged, and in a short time he had reached the banks of the loch, where several non-swimmers stood helplessly watching one poor fellow who was desperately clinging, completely exhausted, to the side of a small boat. His companion had sunk before

Jackson had arrived on the scene. In a moment the schoolboy took in the situation, and with lightning speed he resolved what would be best to do. Flinging his shoes away, and grasping a rope, he swam out with swift strokes to the drowning man. Deftly he fastened the rope around the poor fellow, and with the help of the hitherto helpless men on the side of the loch he was able to get his man to land.

Nearly ten years had passed away, and in January, 1911, another summons for help came to that schoolboy, now a well-qualified doctor, twenty-six years of age. He had gone out to Moukden to serve the stricken in the United Free Church of Scotland Hospital, and he hoped to teach in the new Medical College which was to be built. Then one cold winter day the call came. Plague had broken out in Northern Manchuria. The bitter cold had sent the people crowding into the shelter of their miserable houses, into which they refused to admit the smallest draught of fresh air.

The close railway-carriages and the stuffy inns were full of infection, and the dread scourge spread swiftly. The terrified coolies boarded the trains, seeking the safety of their homes in China, and there was grave danger. The plague had reached Moukden, and unless its southward course could be stayed the countless millions of China would be in deadly peril.

Before the last train-load of coolies reached the frontier the plague had seized two travellers as victims, and the train was immediately sent back to Moukden. There were nearly five hundred coolies aboard who must be kept apart, and those who were suspected themselves isolated from the rest. Only in this way could any of the five hundred escape death. Arthur Jackson did not hesitate. The schoolboy who hastened to the rescue of a drowning man had grown to manhood, and his spirit was unchanged. Readily he volunteered for the work, though he knew well that he was embarking on a desperate undertaking, for

once a man was smitten with the plague there was absolutely no hope of recovery.

He was needed, and that was enough. It was bitter weather—that night there were sixty-two degrees of frost—but the tall young doctor strode manfully through the snow. He had come out to serve, and this was a chance of service to be seized with both hands. Calmly he put on a white overall, slipped a mask and hood well over his head and face, fixed a pad well saturated with strong disinfectant over his nose and mouth, and drew on his stout oilskin boots.

He forgot all about himself in his anxiety to save life. He did not forget the risk which his two brave English assistants were running. 'Stand back, Elder,' he would cry. 'Don't come too near, Coppin; it's risky, and there's no use all of us running risks.'

He gave loving attention to every patient. Now he would smooth the pillow of some poor coolie; now he would gently steady with his strong arm a sufferer on his way

to hospital. Plunging into dirty inns reeking with plague, he brought hope and cheer to the terrified survivors, not one of whom as yet knew whether he would prove to be the next unhappy victim.

At last, after nine days of tireless toil, all seemed well. On the Monday afternoon sixty coolies were discharged, saved from the fatal touch of plague by the British doctor's loving care. Next morning those who remained were transferred to new quarters; but Arthur Jackson was so ill that, after slowly dressing, most unwillingly he went back to bed. That evening the unmistakable signs of plague appeared, and the moment he realized this, forgetful of himself, he warned his fellow doctor of his peril. For twenty-four hours the doctors fought the plague with all their power and skill; but the fight was unequal, and next evening, when the sun was set, the great Physician laid His healing hand upon the young doctor's fevered brow, and gently led him to the land where there is no more pain.

All Moukden was stirred, and the news of the young hero's sacrifice spread far and wide. A few days after his simple burial a memorial service was held in the British Consulate, and was attended by the leading Chinese officials, headed by the Viceroy, Hsi Liang, one of the most important men in the great Chinese Empire. The Bible was opened, and after the Scripture reading prayer was offered. Then the familiar strains of the moving hymn 'For all the saints who from their labours rest' rang out on the wintry air. Then the Viceroy stepped forward, and the silence was broken by these heartfelt words: 'Dr. Jackson, moved by his Sovereign's spirit, and with the heart of the Saviour who gave His life to deliver the world, responded nobly when we asked him to help our country in its need. He went forth to help us in our fight daily where the pest lay thickest. Amidst the groans of the dying he struggled to cure the stricken, to find medicine to stay the evil. Worn by his efforts, the

pestilence seized upon him, and took him from us long ere his time. Our sorrow is beyond all measure; our grief too deep for words. O spirit of Dr. Jackson, we pray you intercede for the twenty million people of Manchuria, and ask the Lord of Heaven to take away this pestilence, so that we may once more lay our heads in peace upon our pillows. In life you were brave; now you are an exalted spirit. Noble spirit, who sacrificed your life for us, help us still, and look down in kindness upon us all.'

Arthur Jackson had spoken to the whole world, and his message stands on the memorial tablet placed to his honour in his old school, Merchant Taylors', Crosby: 'He that loseth his life for My sake shall find it.'

IX

ION KEITH-FALCONER, THE ATHLETE APOSTLE

NEARLY forty years ago a five-mile bicycle race was held at Cambridge which awakened the greatest interest. An amateur, Keith-Falconer, was to meet the professional champion of the world, John Keen. The amateur was well known in the University as a brilliant student and a crack cyclist. We, who are so accustomed to the elegant, smooth-running modern 'safety' machine, should have been astonished to see the high mounts of the contestants. Four years previously Keith-Falconer had ridden a machine 7 feet 2 inches high, which he had to mount by means of a scale of steps before being pushed off and left to his adventures! Four years later, when he

rode in just under thirteen days from Land's End to John o' Groats, his machine was a 58-incher, and weighed 45 pounds.

At last the two were mounted, and from the moment of the start the excitement of the spectators was tremendous. Amateur and professional ran neck and neck the whole course, until both put on so great a spurt towards the close as to make the time of the last mile the fastest of the whole five. Then as the two neared the winning-post yells of delight rent the air. Keith-Falconer was leading. Keen was close behind, but his opponent passed the winning-post just five yards ahead in by far the fastest time on record. The amateur had proved himself to be the fastest rider in the world.

Keith-Falconer was supreme not only on the cycle-track, but also in the class-room. Whatsoever his hand found to do he did it with his might. In shorthand and in Arabic he specially excelled. Once he spent a winter in Assiout, on the Nile, two hundred miles above Cairo, in order that he

might become proficient in spoken Arabic. Unmoved by dust and fever he toiled on, but he found the language 'most appallingly hard.'

He had long been keen on the work of preaching the gospel to the poor and neglected. In Cambridge and in Mile End Road he had tasted the joys of helping those who were in need, and he determined to give himself to the work of building Christ's Empire in foreign lands. His close friend, C. T. Studd, the famous cricketer, together with six Cambridge men, had volunteered to go to China carrying the precious gift of the gospel, and Keith-Falconer heard the call to go and do likewise. What field should he select? His knowledge of Arabic soon helped him to answer that question. He would go to speak of Jesus, the 'Great Prophet of our God,' to those who believed that God was great and that Mohammed was His prophet.

He was thus led to choose Aden as the

place of his life-work. You all could find Aden on the map, I am sure, so I will not tell you exactly where it is, but look it up for yourselves. The town lies on a rocky peninsula, joined by a low sandy isthmus to the mainland. A scorching sky blazes above; scarcely a trace of green is to be found. It is one of the hottest places in the world.

Keith-Falconer resolved that he would go there for a few months with his young wife to see if they could bear the climate, and if the experiment were successful they would return and commence their work in earnest. He was not a poor man; his father was Lord Kintore, and he gladly gave his services without taking a penny. His all was on the holy altar. Talents, money, and life were to him a sacred trust from God, and he was ready to offer his best, his all.

The trial visit proved successful. The weather was hot, and the surroundings trying. Water had to be brought from the village of Sheik Othman, ten miles away,

and at sunrise hundreds of camels were led into the town by their Bedawi drivers, some laden with huge skins of water, others with coffee, grain, wood, and fruit. The young missionary laughed at all discomfort, and soon made himself known amongst the people.

'Look,' they would cry as his tall figure passed down the street, 'that man knows the Koran and written Arabic!'

Quietly he got into touch with the natives. To one he gave a copy of the Gospel by St. John; but after the Mohammedan had read a few chapters he came hastening back again with the book.

'It makes my heart tremble,' he cried, 'lest I should be led to follow Christ.'

Another Mohammedan once stopped the Scotsman, and asked him for a piece of paper, on which he wrote this advice: 'If you want the people to walk in your way, then set up schools.'

Encouraged by all that he had seen, Keith-Falconer returned to England after

this visit, fully decided to open up missionary work in Sheik Othman, where there was water, and where the heat was not so great as in Aden. It was a large village with more than seven thousand people, and he felt that if he could set up a school and orphanage there, he would gain the children; and if he could secure a doctor to go back with him, he would open another door to the hearts of the people. To his joy, after a few months in England, he was able to return with a doctor. There was only one stone bungalow at liberty in the village, and its Arab owner proved so deceitful that Keith-Falconer would not bargain with him. He lived in a native dwelling whilst his house and dispensary of stone were being built. The heat was great, and the flimsy building gave but little shelter. Fever seized the young missionary, and no sooner had he recovered from one attack than he was laid low by another. His wife, Dr. Cowen, his comrade, and a nurse did all that they could for him; but one morning,

when the doctor, after two nights' watching, had gone to rest, and the nurse, tired and worn, was snatching a few minutes' sleep, Mrs. Keith-Falconer came into the room, and in a moment saw what had happened In the quiet of the morning Jesus had come for His brave, worn-out young servant, and the eyes that had closed on the rude native dwelling awoke in the Palace of the King of kings.

X

JOSEPH HARDY NEESIMA, THE FIRST JAPANESE EVANGELIST

In the middle of last century a little fellow was making his way early one morning to a temple in the heart of Hondo, in distant Japan. His heart was filled with anxiety, for his mother was ill, and, although the doctor had given her some medicine, was no better. He knew nothing of the Saviour and His love for all who are sick and anxious; the temple to which he was bound was a heathen place of worship. Arrived there, young Neesima—for that was the laddie's name—prayed before the god with all his might that the patient might quickly recover. Then he bought a small piece of cake, a part of the morning offering, and

carefully carried it home, and gave it to his grateful mother, hoping that it would do what the doctor's medicine had failed to accomplish. To his joy the cake appeared to work wonders, the mother soon recovered, and the little boy thus came to reverence the man-made gods even more than ever. He would rise early in the morning and make his way to a temple three and a half miles distant from his home, worship the gods, and be back again in time for his breakfast.

The years sped on, and one day Neesima picked up a small portion of the Bible in Chinese in a friend's library. He was all athirst for learning, and he eagerly devoured this new treasure, which told the story of the power of God in creation, and His love in giving the Saviour. At once he felt that here was One who claimed his worship, and this was the prayer that he offered: 'Oh, if You have eyes, look upon me; if You have ears, listen for me.'

Determined to learn more of this new teaching, and feeling that there were the

greatest difficulties in gaining any foreign knowledge in his own country, he decided to leave his homeland. Perhaps he might be able to gain light for himself, and then—though this seemed altogether unlikely—he might be able to return as a light-bearer. In those days it was most dangerous to attempt to leave the country. Besides, he had but little money, and he knew nothing of the great mysterious world lying beyond his beloved islands. Then, too, he realized how his own folk would be grieved by his desertion of them. For some time he carefully considered all these matters, but finally he decided that to go would be right.

A young friend secured for him a passage in an American schooner, the *Berlin*, bound for Shanghai. But how was he to get aboard without being discovered? One midnight, dressed as a servant, Neesima, his few possessions on his back, slipped through unfrequented streets to the water-side, following one of his friends who was dressed as a samurai, so that the two

appeared to be master and man. A small boat awaited him; he was placed in the bottom of it and covered up, and soon, to his unbounded relief, he was safely aboard. His relief, however, was short-lived, for in the early morning officials came aboard to search for any Japanese. Neesima's heart quailed; but the kindly captain befriended him, and locked him in his own private room. The searchers' footsteps drew nearer and nearer. They were carefully examining every possible hiding-place; but they did not intrude in the captain's own room, and at length their footsteps died away, and then, after awhile, the imprisoned adventurer heard them leave the ship. The cabin was unlocked, the ship weighed anchor; he was free.

In strange ways Neesima was led onward in his search for God. At Shanghai he found another American vessel, the *Wild Rover*, bound for Boston. In the harbour at Hong-Kong the runaway found a New Testament in Chinese. He longed to buy

it; but he had no money, and he had promised the captain to ask for none. Then, to his joy, he thought of his sword. He sold that, and bought his precious New Testament. On the long voyage to Boston he eagerly spelled out the Gospels. He read straight on through the four evangelists; but of all the verses he spelled out this impressed him the most: 'God so loved the world, that He gave His only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth on Him should not perish, but have eternal life.'

When he reached Boston he bought a second-hand copy of *Robinson Crusoe*; and when he read of the poor castaway on his desert island praying to God as One who was interested in him, the young Japanese came to see that he might pray to a God who was not far away, but gloriously near. Every night he prayed, 'O God, please don't cast me away. Please let me reach my great aim.'

That prayer was heard, and wonderfully answered. Kind friends were raised up for

the young inquirer. He was educated, and in due course sent to college, where he took his degree in 1870. Next he proceeded to a theological college, and at last he was ordained, the first native Japanese evangelist.

At his farewell meeting he pleaded passionately that money might be given to found a Christian college in Japan. Moved by his earnest eloquence—nay, rather, moved by the good Spirit of God—the audience swiftly responded to his appeal, and subscribed nearly £1,000.

On reaching Japan the young missionary's first desire was to revisit his home. He could not wait, but hurried to the familiar village of his childhood. His parents and relatives were overjoyed at his return, and they eagerly drank in the wonderful things that he had to tell. The opportunity was too good to be lost; he told them of the true meaning of Christianity, of the worship and love which we owe to God the Father and Jesus the Saviour.

Awed and subdued, the family decided that they must no longer worship ancestors and the gods of Japan. Young Neesima took down all the gods and made a huge bonfire of them. That was the beginning of gospel preaching in the heart of Japan.

Time would fail to tell of the toils of this heroic man. To-day there stands a great Christian University, the Doshisha—that is, 'The company of one aim'—which has grown from the school he started in Kyoto, the centre of heathen worship in Japan.

Thousands of students have passed through its halls, many of whom are preaching the gospel, and most of whom are influencing their fellow countrymen in a Christian direction. In the winning of Japan for Jesus Christ, Neesima had laid the foundation of a mighty building. He who as a lad worshipped at a heathen shrine had helped to build the temple of the Lord in his heathen homeland.

XI

ORIGEN, STUDENT OF SCRIPTURE

HUNDREDS of years ago an eager boy used to wander through the streets of Alexandria, the beautiful city built on the fringe of the blue waters of the Mediterranean where the ancient Nile flings itself through many mouths into the welcoming sea. He loved to watch the moving throngs, and to listen to the babel of voices as men from far-away lands chattered loudly to one another as they paced the stately colonnades. Sometimes he would go down to the sea-shore and feast his eyes on the graceful vessels which stalwart labourers were filling with corn for Rome, the mistress of the Empire. Sometimes he would turn to the great library and look with awe at the

grave and reverend professors who entered its lofty portals.

He was always asking questions, always eager to learn. His mother was a dark-eyed Jewess, one of the many thousands who lived within the city, though the Jewish quarter was separated from the other portions by enclosing walls. At her knee he learned her language—Hebrew—and one of his greatest pleasures was to join with her when, with soft, melodious voice, she would sing one of the sweet songs of her homeland, a psalm of David. His father, Leonides, would tell him many a Bible story; and as the boy listened his eyes brightened, and he would interrupt with many an eager inquiry into the deep meaning of the words his father used. As soon as he could read he used to commit to memory portions of the Word of God.

So life passed happily by, until one dreadful day, when he was sixteen years of age, his father was suddenly seized and

flung into prison because he was a follower of the Lord Jesus Christ.

'I will go, too,' he cried bravely, 'and share the horrors of the prison with my dear father.'

'Stay,' said his mother gently, as she laid a restraining hand upon the impetuous boy's shoulder. 'What good would you do by such an action? How do you think you would be able to be with him? Do you forget that you would be leaving me alone?'

Origen hung his head. In his eagerness he had not realized how little he could do for his father, and how much he could do for his mother. Sorely she needed his help, for soon afterwards the brave Leonides yielded his life as a martyr rather than deny his Saviour.

Origen determined to honour his father's memory by giving himself entirely to the service of his dear one's Master. No hardship did he count too great, no fear of his father's persecutors possessed his soul.

For long years he walked barefooted, wore only one robe even on the chilliest days, slept a few hours on the hard ground, and ate but sparingly.

Enemies were ever about him, and to avoid them he was compelled to move to and fro, now to Caesarea in Palestine, now back again to the city of his birth. But in spite of it all he was earnestly engaged in the building of Christ's Empire. He never tired of explaining the words of Scripture to the great crowds that flocked to hear him ; and when he was not thus engaged in public teaching he was occupied in writing, and we have still the books that he wrote to help us better to understand the wonderful words of life.

That he might write and speak with the greatest possible accuracy he visited the places where Jesus had lived and moved, so that he could say, 'I have followed the footsteps of Jesus, and of His disciples, and of the prophets.'

At last he, like his father, was seized and

flung into prison because he was a Christian. He was cruelly tortured. Nearly seventy years of age, he was loaded with chains, an iron collar was thrust about his neck, he suffered the horrors of the rack, he was threatened with death at the stake. But nothing could move him, for he knew whom he had believed. Freedom came when his bitter persecutor died; but his sufferings had worn him out, and soon after Origen passed to the peace and freedom of heaven to join the glorious company of the apostles, the goodly fellowship of the prophets, and the noble army of martyrs.

XII

GEORGE PILKINGTON OF UGANDA

FAR away in the fevered heart of Africa a lonely missionary, Alexander Mackay, was bravely toiling. For twelve terrible years he had given his best, and his friends begged him to come home.

'Come home?' wrote the dauntless hero. 'Send us only our first twenty men, and I may be tempted to come and help you to find another twenty.'

George Pilkington, an old Uppingham boy and Cambridge graduate, heard the call, and, with three companions, sailed for needy Uganda. Six months had passed before the little party started upon the long march inland from Zanzibar. A great train of porters accompanied them, carrying

clothes, beds, tents, cooking utensils, and all the various appliances necessary for so weary a journey. At first their route lay through mountainous country, the hillsides dotted with tiny villages of huts shaped like beehives; the valleys rich in Indian corn, sweet potatoes, pineapples, and bananas. Later they reached a dry, waterless district. Water was to be found only after a long search, and when it was secured it was poor and brackish.

'During the last two months I have swallowed more mud in water than in all my life previously,' wrote the young missionary.

But there were other difficulties. The tribes surrounding them were thievish and cruel. Any stragglers were speared and robbed. Within a few miles of Pilkington's party an Arab caravan of over five hundred souls, men, women, and children, was attacked, and not one remained alive. Yet, although the missionaries were unarmed, and might easily have been massacred

while they slept, they were under divine guardianship, and came safely through their many perils.

When 'Pilks,' as he was known both at school and on the mission-field, reached Mengo, the capital, he realized how much the natives—the Waganda—needed to learn the story of the Cross.

The inhabitants of that great country, lying to the north of the Victoria Nyanza, a lake so vast as to resemble an inland sea, were living in misery, superstition, and fear. Three hundred brothers and cousins of the king were driven into a dike by the roadside not far from the capital, and left there to starve. A boy who had only one ear would tell that he had been punished by the loss of the other because a goat had slipped away from those he had been tending, and been lost. If any unfortunate fellow trod upon the king's mat, he was immediately put to death.

King Suna's favourite dog died, and a native saw in this a splendid opportunity

for advancement. Yelping and barking, he rushed into the royal presence.

'What possesses you?' cried the people in astonishment.

'I am possessed by the spirit of the dead dog,' he gravely replied.

The people implicitly believed him. The king ordered that a magnificent house should be built for him as speedily as possible, and the cunning rogue lived in it without toil or anxiety all the rest of his days.

Pilkington at once set to work amongst them. It was his great ambition to give them the Scriptures in their own tongue, and he lost no time in commencing his work. In his house of tall sun-dried grass-cane, with holes for windows, a floor of beaten earth, and a grass roof, he occupied himself in the great work of translation.

Familiar hymns, such as 'Onward, Christian soldiers,' 'I heard the voice of Jesus say,' 'Just as I am,' and 'There is life for a look at the Crucified One,' he translated, as well as the Bible.

He had always loved boys, and he soon gained the affection of his little black brothers. One of them had been bought for four yards of calico, and another for an old tin canister, though the little fellow stoutly asserted that it was really a biscuit-tin!

The people loved to gather at the beating of a great drum, calling them to assemble for prayer. Their eagerness for the books that told of Jesus was so great that they would come laden with cowrie-shells to make their purchases, but were often sent away in disappointment because all the precious books had been sold.

'All day long,' wrote Pilkington once, 'the place has been crowded with people who refuse to believe there are no more books. How would you feel if at a Christmas party the tea and cakes ran so short that only one in every five got anything at all? I feel something like that. And yet these books are of more value to these starving souls than are tea and cake

to a starving child. I wish you could run a long pin into every one at home who's asleep and won't wake up to help us.'

For a short time he returned on holiday to England, making his way back to Uganda on a bicycle from Frere Town. Parts of the roads were terrible. He rode for miles on a flat tyre, and afterwards on a substitute of rope and raw hide. His seat-pillar was cracked and bound with wire; but he reached Mengo in safety, nearly a month ahead of the caravan which had started with him.

Time sped on, until in the autumn grave tidings reached the Europeans. Sudanese soldiers mutinied, and raised the standard of rebellion. At once the Baganda were sent to attack the rebels, and with them went Dr. Cook to render medical aid, and Pilkington to serve as interpreter. The rebels were hemmed in, and shut into their fort. Several charges were made, but the besieged would not yield. Pilkington sent

a short pencilled note to his mother, which concluded :

'We, and the country, and God's work here are all in His hands, and it's all right.'

That was his farewell message, for a fortnight later he fell in an advance. His faithful boy, Aloni, knelt beside him, and tenderly said :

'My master, you are dying.'

'Yes, my child,' was the low reply, 'it is as you say.'

Aloni had learned of Christ, and he went on : 'Sir, he that believeth in Christ, although he die, yet shall he live.'

'Yes, my child,' said his dying master, 'it is as you say—shall never die.'

Gently they carried him to the rear, and, with his characteristic courtesy, he thanked them.

'Now give me rest,' he asked.

And God heard, and answered that request. . . . 'When he had said this, he fell asleep.'

XIII

FORBES ROBINSON, THE PRAYERFUL DON

In the year 1884 two boys, spending their summer holidays at Killybegs, on the north of Donegal Bay, set off one morning for what they intended to be a short run in a small open sailing-boat. Scarcely had they left the shelter of the harbour before a squall caught them, and they found it quite impossible to regain the shore. The wind increased in violence; the waves rose threateningly. To turn the boat would mean the gravest danger of being swamped, so the two boys were compelled to head the boat for the great Atlantic, leaving behind them the shores of Donegal and facing the sweep of ocean, with America as the nearest land ahead! Happily, however, after a

very anxious time spent in baling out the water and keeping the boat from turning, it was found possible to head her a little to the south without danger; and at last, with bare poles, and almost waterlogged, the little craft ran into Bundoran, on the south of the bay, sixty miles by land from Killybegs. Leaving the boat, the two boys, drenched to the skin, and, of course, with no luggage of any kind, decided to start on a walking tour along the west coast of Ireland.

The two boys were brothers, and one of them named Forbes, Forbes Robinson, grew to be a great influence for good, though his earthly life was all too short. Always keen on reading, he did not shine on the school playing-fields; but he always admired men and boys who were fine athletes. Later, when he moved from Rossall School to Christ's College, Cambridge, he won distinction upon distinction, until he gained the proud position of Fellow of his college.

His whole life was lived in the spirit of his family motto, 'Born not simply for self, but for the whole world.' Ordained a clergyman of the Church of England, he became a theological lecturer and an examining chaplain. But in spirit he was poles asunder from what one imagines a theological professor to be. There was nothing of the dry-as-dust about him. He loved laughter, the fresh air, and all the interests of young men and boys. So popular was he that visitors to his rooms often had to sit on the floor because every chair was already occupied. He loved travel, though his experience in Donegal Bay made him hate sea voyages. He visited Switzerland and South Africa, Russia and the Riviera.

But above all in his life was the definite desire to help others, young and old, wise and unlearned, to realize the wonder of the love of Christ. Once he went on a mission tour through part of South Cornwall. Accompanied by the brother who had shared

the Irish adventure, he went from village to village, holding simple services in the open air. The two brothers had scarcely more luggage than on their Irish walking tour, all that they carried being a small brown-paper parcel; but at the end of each evening's service the two preachers simply stated that they had come with neither food nor money, and hoped that some kind friend would be moved to give them hospitality. Never were they disappointed. Every night a host was found, and the lodging, often very humble, was offered for the two, who, like their Lord and Master, had not where to lay their heads.

Men often wondered at the marvellous power over young undergraduates that Forbes Robinson possessed. This was his secret; and if only all girls and boys would remember it, and earnestly try to follow the same road, the world would quickly be changed. Writing to a friend, he said: 'When I call a man by his Christian name, I usually make it a rule to pray for him. . . .

I wonder whether you would sometimes pray for me? I believe immensely in the power of prayer. It is the greatest favour I can ask of you.'

Yes, that was the secret of his strong, bright, happy life. He believed in prayer; he spent many an hour in pleading with his heavenly Father for those whom he loved and in whom he took a deep and unselfish interest.

He was but thirty-seven when he was called home, but his works still follow him. What an international athlete said of him is echoed and re-echoed by countless other voices: 'His goodness and his help to me in my Cambridge days were wonderful. He altered my life.'

Not for self, but for all, Forbes Robinson lived and died, powerful because prayerful.

XIV

MARY SLESSOR, 'EVERYBODY'S MOTHER'

In a great Scottish textile factory a young girl used to work twelve weary hours—from six in the morning until six in the evening—every day. While her hands were busy her mind was not unoccupied. Like David Livingstone, her great fellow countryman, she would place a book on her loom, and study it as much as possible.

When Mary Slessor's day of toil was ended at the mill, there was still much for her to do. Her father, gentle and kindly when sober, was sadly changed by his love of strong drink. So much did he spend in this evil way that Mrs. Slessor often did not know how to obtain food and clothing for

her bairns, and in her distress Mary would steal sadly to the pawnbroker's to raise a little money for their needs.

There was one bright day in her wan week. After the terror of the Saturday night, when, with her mother, she would wait the coming of her drunken father, the Sunday dawned, for her indeed a 'day of rest and gladness.' She loved her church and her Sunday school. 'We would as soon have thought of going to the moon as of being absent from a service,' she wrote when describing these early years. Still more did she love her Bible. She loved to read and reread the story of the Saviour's love. The margins of her Bibles were crammed with notes that she had made, and the verses were thickly underlined. The more she read of the love of Jesus, the more she understood its wonder; and, thrilled by that world-redeeming love, she volunteered for service in Calabar, where the Cross and Calabar rivers pour their muddy waters into the Bight of Biafra,

fringed with gloomy mangrove forests, rooted in swamp and haunted by malaria.

'Whyever do you want to go to such a mission-field?' her friends asked in astonishment.

'It is the post of danger, and therefore the post of honour,' was her quiet and brave reply.

Twelve years after Mary Slessor reached Calabar she determined to set out upon a great adventure. Up country, in the vast forests, lived the lawless heathen tribe of Okoyong. They were ignorant, degraded, and cruel. They believed in witchcraft, and when a free man fell ill they were convinced that some one had thrown an evil spell upon him. The witch-doctor would be summoned, and all whom he pointed out would be bound in chains and their heads chopped off. Twin babies were believed to be terribly unlucky, and to prevent their doing any mischief it was the cruel practice to thrust them immediately into a water-pot, break a hole in

the back wall of the hut, and throw them into the bush, where they would be left to be devoured by wild beasts or eaten by a myriad insects.

To reach these savages and to try to subdue them by the power of Christ was Mary's great desire. Already in Creek Town she had done much, and had gathered a little household of deserted children about her; but there were other workers there, and the heart of the brave woman yearned to open up the great inland country where the gospel was yet unknown.

One rainy morning she and her little household of five rescued children set off in a hollow tree-trunk twenty feet long, the royal canoe, lent by her friend and admirer King Eyo, escorted by dark-skinned paddlers and bearers, and with but one white man, Mr. Bishop, the mission printer, who volunteered to see her settled safely in her new home. Ere they reached the landing-beach darkness was falling, and the village of Ekenge was four miles away

through the dripping forest. Mary Slessor decided that she would go first with the tired children. Mr. Bishop, with one or two men, was to follow with dry clothes, a door and a window for the hut, and all that was necessary for cooking; while the other carriers would follow afterwards.

Off the little party moved through the darkness to the unknown. Mary's heart almost failed her as she plunged into the gloom of the great forest, home of savage beasts and a thousand dangers. But she knew that her God was as near in the darkness as in the dawn. She had come to carry on His work, and she quietly lifted her heart in prayer, and was cheered and comforted.

At the head of the little procession went a black boy about eleven years old. He was tired and frightened like all the others, his few clothes were wet through, the mud was slippery, and he was carrying on his head a box laden with tea, sugar, and bread.

Next to him plodded on a little fellow only eight years of age. He was carrying

a kettle and pots, and the tears rolled down his almost baby cheeks. Next trotted a wee boy of only three, and just after him a little girl of five, the two sobbing loudly in their weariness and terror.

Last of all came Mary Slessor. She, too, was worn out. She was carrying a heavy bundle and a big baby-girl ; but she bravely sang songs to cheer her little companions, and at last Ekenge was reached. Mary Slessor, the Pathfinder, was beginning her great life-work.

Twenty-seven years had passed away since that little procession entered Ekenge, and now Mary Slessor had finished her life-task. Through the darkness of the forest that we call death she had passed to the welcoming Master, from the loneliness of the African bush to the light and fellowship of heaven.

For those long years, with scarcely a holiday, she had lived amongst the people, bravely defending all who were oppressed, building little chapels and mission-houses,

training the children in her home and in the schools, preparing the way of her Lord. Never thinking of herself, always ready to run to the help of any in need, she had lived in true imitation of the life of Jesus, who came to seek and to save that which was lost. For over two thousand square miles her influence was felt, and from the most distant and savage places men came to her to settle their disputes and to ask for her advice.

We have spoken of some saints who lived long, long ago. Mary Slessor was a modern saint ; but two years have passed away since she entered into the rest that remaineth for the people of God. She had found that the secret of a happy life is the service of God and man, and, in spite of loneliness, hardship, fever, and disappointment, she was rich in happiness and in the witness of a good conscience.

To-day there are nearly fifty churches and schools in the great district that she opened up, and nearly fifteen hundred men

and women have responded to the call of the Cross and become members of the Christian Church.

Her influence will never fade. Government officials and bloodthirsty savages, old men and little children, loved her and wondered at her enthusiasm, and still more at her courage.

The factory-girl had been faithful to the call of God. She had earned from the degraded and sinful a title beyond all price —'*Eka kpuk pru owo*' ('Everybody's Mother').

XV

GUIDO HERMAN FRIDOLIN VERBECK, THE FRIEND OF JAPAN

THERE was great rejoicing in a Dutch home some eighty-five years ago, for a little baby-boy, only two years old, had been rescued from a canal into which he had fallen and been nearly drowned. And well might his parents rejoice, for their laddie, who possessed the lengthy name of Guido Herman Fridolin Verbeck, was to grow up to be one of God's greatest gifts, not to his own land of Holland, but to the great Eastern Empire of Japan.

His boyish days passed happily in his home near Zeist, a little town that slumbers peacefully near the banks of the sluggish river, the Old Rhine. The children loved

the open air, and many happy hours were spent in the trim garden amidst the scent of the flowers and the delight of plucking the ripe fruit from the bending boughs. The little fellow had his favourite pets, timid rabbits, cackling fowls, and strutting peacocks. All around the level fields were intersected by canals, and many miles the children covered in their light rowing-boat.

Winter brought new delights. The canals were often frozen, and the merry children used to slide and skate, their shouts and laughter ringing far through the clear wintry air. Then in the evenings, when all outside was bleak and cold, they would nestle round the cheerful fire, listening to the stories that their father told; sometimes they would sing together their favourite songs, and then they would settle down to a quiet hour with their precious books, with a well-laden dish of apples, nuts, and pears close at hand.

Their lives were not all play and song and laughter. The children worked hard at

their lessons, and soon began to learn French and German. In addition to this they determined to learn English, so they undertook this study in their spare time at home. They found the foreigner's usual stumbling-block in the pronunciation of our 'th,' and as they went about they used to try to overcome this difficulty by continually repeating, 'Theophilus Thistle thrust three thousand thistles into the thick of his thumb.' The eager student gained his goal, for he became able to speak English as well as you or I.

When school-days were over he became an engineer, and crossed the wide Atlantic to America, because he hoped to find greater opportunities there. He was busily engaged in his work in his new home, when he was gripped by fever. In his sickness he vowed that if God would give him health and strength again, he would devote his spared life to the service of his Healer on the foreign field. His life was spared, and not long afterwards the young Dutchman

entered a college to be trained for the mission-field. As soon as his training was completed there came an urgent call from Japan, then newly opened up. Verbeck gladly obeyed.

In the beauty of a moonlight night the young missionary first saw the land of his life-work. His eyes feasted on the scene, and his enthusiasm increased as the rising sun replaced the waning moon and showed the full glory of the fairy landscape. Beyond the unruffled sea stretched a great city, its white roofs flinging back with added splendour the radiance of the morning sunbeams. In the background rose lofty hills, dressed in the green of waving woods; whilst farther still towered purple mountains still draped with the folds of the morning mists. But when the young Dutchman landed he saw signs which filled his heart with sorrow. In cities and villages, on broad highway and lonely by-lane, he saw notices declaring that the Christian religion was forbidden, and

offering rewards to any who would give information concerning such as they suspected were followers of that religion.

Whenever the missionary spoke to a Japanese on the subject of Christianity, at once the man's hand would fly to his throat, as a sign that the subject was too dangerous for conversation.

The first converts were won in a wonderful way. A British fleet was off the Japanese coasts, and a Japanese official, named Murata, was ordered to see that no men from the fleet came ashore, and also to prevent any Japanese from leaving their country for foreign shores. One day, as Murata was afloat, he found a little book tossing on the waves. He picked it up, and his interest was awakened when he discovered that it spoke of God and the Christian religion. He sent to Shanghai and secured a translation of the wonderful book. As he read of the life, the works, and the love and purity of Jesus, he was thrilled. He resolved that he would learn

all that he could of this wondrous Person. Hearing of Verbeck, he sent his brother to ask him for guidance ; and later he came with his brother and his two sons, as well as a train of followers, that he himself might receive the instruction for which he longed.

Well knowing the awful risk that they ran, the little company asked the missionary to baptize them ; and so, twelve years after finding the book upon the water, they received the water of the sacrament of baptism.

Japan was quickly awakening from her age of sleep. Her people were eager for knowledge, and Verbeck was asked to open a school. Soon he had over one hundred pupils. Afterwards he established a school in Tokio, which became the Imperial University.

As year succeeded year his influence grew. The greatest men of Japan came to consult him. He translated for them the law-books of the West, and he had much to do with the sending to Europe of a company

of Japanese for the purpose of studying her civilization and customs. The result of this was that the notice-boards against Christianity were all pulled down, and opportunities for missionary service were offered on many sides.

Verbeck never forgot that he was a missionary. He received from the Emperor the decoration of the Order of the Rising Sun for his public services ; but his greatest joy lay in the love of those who through his preaching had seen the rising of the Sun of Righteousness with healing in His wings.

When he died this tribute was paid by a Japanese paper, the *Nation's Friend* :

' By the death of Dr. Verbeck the Japanese people have lost a benefactor, teacher, and friend. . . . It should be remembered that this benefactor, teacher, and friend of Japan prayed for the welfare of this empire until he breathed his last.'

XVI

JOHN WESLEY, THE SAVIOUR OF HIS COUNTRY

NEAR midnight on February 9, 1709, a little girl lying asleep in the rectory of Epworth, the little market-town that stands above the surrounding Lincolnshire levels, was awakened by a smell of burning. Terror made her fully awake, and, to her horror, she saw flaming pieces of wood falling from the ceiling. At that moment there rang out in the street the cry of 'Fire!' Immediately the whole household was astir. The rector, leaping from his bed, discovered that it was his own house that was endangered. At once the family was hurried downstairs; but when they reached the hall, with the threatening

flames surrounding them, it was discovered that in the excitement the door keys had been left upstairs. Not a moment was to be lost, for the flames were fast approaching the staircase; but happily the keys were secured before it caught fire. The street door was opened, but the strong wind drove the flames in with such fury as to make the little party beat a hasty retreat. There was plainly no means of escape in that direction. Quickly other doors were unlocked; some of the children were passed through the windows, others through a little door into the garden. All danger to life seemed over, when suddenly the anxious parents made a terrible discovery. One of the children, a little laddie only five years old, was missing! When the rector had rushed into the night nursery to give the alarm, the nursemaid had picked up the youngest child, and, telling the four others to follow her, had rushed out, not waiting to ascertain whether they were all awake. Little John, sleeping peacefully through all

the excitement, had been left behind! The distracted rector, thinking that he heard the child crying, dashed into the flames; but they drove him back. Three times he made the desperate attempt, and three times he was driven back by the fury of the fire. Finding that he could not reach his child, the rector knelt to commend him to the care of his heavenly Father. At that moment a cry arose from the crowd now assembled in the yard:

'There he is, by the window!'

Yes, the little fellow could be seen standing on a chest near the window, for though it was midnight the flames turned the darkness into day.

'I'll run for a ladder,' cried one man in his excitement.

'There'll be no time for that,' said another. 'Look, I'll stand close to the wall and you can push a man up on to my shoulders, and he'll be able to reach the little chap.'

Swiftly this suggestion was carried out.

The crowd watched with breathless anxiety. Happily the rectory was low, and the rescuer, firmly held by willing hands on his friend's shoulders, was able to clasp little Jack and hand him down to those below, to be passed on to the comforting arms of his overjoyed mother.

John Wesley never forgot that marvellous escape. 'Is not this a brand plucked from the burning?' was the motto of an engraving of a house in flames, placed under one of his portraits.

Years afterwards England was smouldering. The causes which resulted in the fierce and cruel flames of the French Revolution were at work in England, and God used John Wesley to save England from the horrors of the fire. Drunkenness, cruelty, profanity, gambling, and many other sins were common throughout the United Kingdom. John Wesley's heart was moved with compassion for his fellow countrymen, and he dedicated his life to the service of God and his country.

For over sixty years he rose at four o'clock in the morning, and for over fifty years scarcely a day passed upon which he did not hold a morning service at five. In those days, when roads were bad and highwaymen prowled in search of plunder, this hero of the Cross made his way into every corner of Great Britain in all weathers, and even crossed repeatedly to Ireland, that he might tell to all, rich and poor, wise and ignorant, young and old, the grimy miner from the colliery, the wretched prisoner condemned to death, the good news that God was their Father and Jesus Christ their Saviour. He used to take his stand in the open air—for so degraded were many of the clergymen of his day that they hated this fearless little man, who preached against all wickedness and vice, and refused him admission to their pulpits—and there, in clear and ringing tones which could be heard with ease by the assembled thousands, he would appeal to their consciences and tell the secret of true life and service. As he

preached many of his hearers were convinced of their sin and folly, and turned to God in true penitence and prayer.

His rules for the school at Kingswood seem to us terribly severe; but in his day boys and girls had not reached their kingdom, and most people believed that it was a mistake for children to enjoy themselves, and readily adopted the German theory, 'He that plays when he is a boy will play when he is a man.' Yet, in spite of that, Wesley loved children, and when he was at Bath he used to order his conveyance every day half an hour before he was ready to use it for the business of the day, and crowded into it as many children as it would carry, so that he might enjoy the pleasure of a ride with them.

Far and wide spread his influence, until to-day there are millions of men and women who thank God because John Wesley, himself saved from the fire, was the means of saving his country, and many, not only of his own countrymen, but also of the

inhabitants of dark and distant places of the world. Undismayed by savage mobs, untired by ceaseless toil, undaunted by seeming failure, John Wesley's whole life and character may be found in the words of his brother Charles, words which carry us back to the rectory fire and the brand plucked from the burning:

I want an even strong desire,
  I want a calmly fervent zeal,
To save poor souls out of the fire,
  To snatch them from the verge of hell,
And turn them to a pardoning God,
And quench the brands in Jesu's blood.

XVII

FRANCIS XAVIER, THE TIRELESS TRAVELLER

NEARLY four hundred years ago, at day-break on a fresh and cloudless June morning, a little Chinese junk slipped out from the harbour of Malacca, and made her way down the strait towards the South China Sea. Her captain was a famous pirate, whose dreadful deeds at sea had given his craft the ill-omened name of 'The Robber's Vessel.'

Aboard the boat, mingling with the wild and savage crew, was a missionary, Francis Xavier. He had learned that the Japanese were anxious to receive preachers of the gospel, and, burning with an intense desire to extend the kingdom of God, he had sought

to secure a passage to the then little known islands of the Far East. In the harbour of Malacca there were lying many Portuguese merchantmen; but although they were bound for Japan, yet they were to call at numerous ports on the voyage thither, and the missionary's ardour would not suffer him to delay. When the vessel stood out to sea, the captain and his crew, who were idolaters to a man, set up an idol on the poop, and fell down before it in worship, despite all that the missionary could say. They cast lots in order to discover what their god wished them to do; and the result was that, instead of the speedy voyage that Xavier so earnestly desired, the junk moved slowly, tacking hither and thither, now landing at an island for wood, now standing out to sea. Suddenly they were overwhelmed by a terrific storm. The crew hurriedly lowered the sails and cast their anchor, but in the fury of the storm the pirate captain's daughter was caught by the sweep of the hungry waves and carried

overboard. It was impossible to save her, and at once all was sorrow and confusion aboard. For a moment Xavier's life was in deadly peril. The captain, maddened by the loss of his darling child, prepared to throw the missionary overboard; but providentially the storm was hushed, and the stricken father's mind grew calm. The steadfast missionary's life was spared, and soon he caught sight of the welcome shores of Japan.

Francis Xavier throughout his life proved himself a tireless herald of the Cross. Years before his voyage in the pirate junk he had dedicated himself to the great task of preaching the gospel in the East. When parting from his dearest friend on leaving Lisbon, he had said, 'My brother, these are the last words which I shall ever say to you. We shall see each other no more in this present world. Let us endure our separation with patience, for it is most certain that, being well united with our Lord, we shall be united in ourselves.' He had left

Portugal on his thirty-sixth birthday, and the story of the next ten years of his brief life is one of toil and travel, preaching and peril, that reminds us of what was said of Saint Paul, 'He ran through the world with an incredible swiftness, and as it were on the wing.'

In those ten years the saintly missionary had carried the gospel to Mozambique and Goa; he had rounded Cape Comorin, and preached the good news of salvation in Tuticorin; Travancore had heard his voice, and Ceylon had received his message. Right along the Coromandel coast he had voyaged on his holy mission, and, passing to the Straits Settlements, he had thence set out in the junk for Japan.

But even now he remained unsatisfied. He thought of the great empire of China, with her countless millions, and he longed to bring to them the water of life. Off the Kwangtung coast of South China there lies a barren and mountainous little island, Sancian. This Xavier determined to make

his base, from which he hoped to proceed to the conquest of China. It was a perilous venture, as he well knew. Only twelve months before Xavier's arrival in Sancian some Portuguese sailors had been wrecked on the mainland, and, after cruel flogging, had been thrust into dark and evil-smelling dungeons. The Portuguese merchants of Sancian painted all these horrors in vivid colours, and urged the missionary to abandon his scheme.

His courage never faltered.

'If I should be terrified with the hardships, and want courage to attempt those difficulties, would it not be incomparably worse than all the evils with which you threaten me? Nothing is capable of altering my resolution. Let all the powers of hell break loose upon me. I despise them, provided God be on my side; for if He be for us, who shall be against us?' were his stout words.

The Portuguese, thus defeated, sent some Chinese merchants to Xavier to tell

him of the great dangers that he would assuredly meet; but the missionary, rejoicing in his opportunity, so preached Jesus to them that they begged him to carry his wonderful message to their countrymen. Overjoyed at the prospect of commencing his mission, Xavier secured an interpreter; but his next difficulty was to find sailors willing to take the risk of conveying him to the mainland. This, too, at length was overcome, a Chinese promising to take him over in the dead of the night and to set him ashore in a deserted part of the coast. All now seemed ready, when a new difficulty arose. The Portuguese, afraid lest the Chinese, enraged by Xavier's landing on their coast, should take revenge upon his countrymen, and take their ships, if not their lives, begged him to wait. Always careful of the interests and lives of others, the missionary agreed to wait until their business was ended and they had left the island.

Whilst he was thus waiting he spent

much of his time in happy thoughts of the conquest of China for Christ. In a letter to a friend he declared that he had still further ambitions. When he had planted the Christian standard in the heart of the great Chinese Empire, he hoped to return to Europe, and then to cross over to Africa to win new kingdoms for his Lord.

At last the Portuguese merchants left; but then new troubles befell. His interpreter refused longer to serve him; the man who had promised to take him to the Kwangtung coast had sailed away, and failed to return at the time they had agreed upon.

Disappointed and heartsick, the tired traveller was seized with fever. From his Pisgah he could view the Promised Land, but he might not enter.

'Rock, rock, when wilt thou open to my Saviour?' he cried.

But he lost heart only for a moment. He trusted to the end, and his last cry, ere

he left this earth with all its journeyings for the great journey to heaven, was :

> O Lord, in Thee have I trusted :
> Let me never be confounded.

To-day, when we see the rock opened, China ready to receive the gospel, we know that Francis Xavier's life and trust have been abundantly justified.

XVIII

BARTHOLOMEW ZIEGENBALG, THE ROYAL ROADMAKER

On July 9, 1706, a stout sailing-vessel, the *Sophie Hedwig*, having weathered the storms and perils of the long voyage from Europe, cast anchor in the roadstead of Tranquebar. Aboard the good ship were two young men who eagerly scanned the shore, for the Danish settlement was to be their home, and, as they earnestly hoped, a Christian lighthouse, flinging its warning beams into the surrounding darkness of heathendom. Already they had met with many obstacles. One of the two, Bartholomew Ziegenbalg, had fought against ill-health all through the years of boyhood; but the dire need of the heathen had impressed itself upon his mind and heart,

so that when a letter reached him, telling him that Frederick IV, the truly Christian king of Denmark, was seeking men to go as missionaries to his possessions overseas, despite his delicate constitution, he agreed to obey the call. His fellow student, Henry Plutschau, determined to accompany him; and, triumphing over opposition at home and on shipboard, the two now stood viewing what they both trusted would prove to be a land of promise.

All too quickly they discovered that they had bitter enemies in Tranquebar. The East India Company, having learned of the proposed mission, had sent secret instructions to their officials to hinder the young men in every possible direction, and the officials faithfully obeyed these malicious orders. Between ship and shore boiled the surf, but no one would get a boat for the missionaries. Day after day they helplessly waited in sight of the shore which they could not reach, until at last they were transferred to another ship, and at ten

o'clock one sultry morning their little boat plunged through the seething waters, and stalwart Tamils carried them ashore. The angry captain rushed threateningly upon the bearers, and even raised his stick against the missionaries; but little did they heed his blind fury: they were ashore! Admission to the town was refused them, but they waited patiently in the heat until at last the commander of the town came out to them.

'Why have you come here, and who has sent you?' he roughly demanded.

Quietly they showed him the royal letter and the king's seal.

For a moment the sight of these silenced him; then he said churlishly, 'Perhaps you may be of some use in the Danish school; there is nothing else that you are fit for!'

With this he turned haughtily away, and marched back to the town, followed by the saddened but undismayed missionaries.

In the market-place they found a man to befriend them, and before long they were

resting in the cool shelter of a hospitable home. Day after day they were subjected to mean and spiteful persecution ; but they toiled steadily on. They were the pioneers of Protestant missions in India, and they were content if they could but make the roads over which in days to come Christ's soldiers might march to victory.

One morning, as Ziegenbalg was quietly at work in his room, a slave appeared with a message from the commander, harshly summoning the missionary to appear before him. Ziegenbalg had sent to him a petition in favour of a widow who had been cruelly oppressed, and this chivalrous action had aroused the fury of the bully.

'Tell your master that I refuse to obey an order delivered in such a fashion,' said Ziegenbalg fearlessly.

The slave went away, and shortly afterwards the tramp of armed men was heard in the narrow street. The brave pioneer was seized, and hurried away to the fortress. When the last soldier of his escort

had crossed the drawbridge, it was raised, and four weary months had dragged by before the victim of such bitter malice recrossed it. The room into which he was thrust was pitifully small, and situated so close to the kitchen as to make existence in the stifling heat almost impossible. No visitors might see him, no soldier might speak to him, and even pens and ink were refused him, until one night a friendly guard slipped writing materials into his cell, and whispered words of sympathy and hope.

Funds were needed to enable them to build churches and schools, and their hearts glowed when a letter was brought to them, delivered from a Danish ship that had just arrived, stating that aboard the boat was a gift for them of £300. Their joy, however, soon faded. The carelessness of the drunken captain caused the boat that was bringing the treasure ashore to capsize, and everything aboard her fell into the sea. Although at the spot where the accident

happened the water was but six feet deep, the heartless governor, overjoyed at the missionaries' new misfortune, refused to make any real effort to recover the money, and it was never found.

Still Ziegenbalg plodded on. His friend Plutschau returned to Europe; but lonely and ill as he was the 'royal Danish missionary' proved himself worthy of his title. Working resolutely at his Tamil studies, he was soon able to preach in that tongue; and then he set himself the tremendous task of translation. He toiled so steadily that he was able to give to the natives the whole of the New Testament, and the Old Testament as far as the Book of Ruth, as well as a small Tamil hymn-book and a catechism, in their own language. He preached at least three times each week; he received inquirers in his study; he carried on a school, and received children as boarders. Brighter days were now dawning. Commander Hassius was recalled, and the new governor showed himself a

friend of missions. A beautiful new church was built, and Ziegenbalg eagerly looked forward to building many others.

Then befell a disaster that killed the hero. Orders came from home that the missionaries must work without schools or churches, simply travelling to and fro, preaching the gospel all the day long. Ziegenbalg well knew that such methods would bring failure. He had tried, and the disappointment was too great for his frail spirit and body to bear. In 1719, aged only thirty-six, he died of a broken heart. Just before he passed away, shading his eyes, he asked, 'How is it so light? It seems as if the sun were shining in my eyes.' So he left heathen darkness for the land of marvellous light.

His work was not in vain. He had prepared the way of the Lord, and along the road that he made for two hundred years Protestant missionaries have passed to make the Empire of India the Empire of Jesus Christ, the Lord of lords.

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